

Volume 24, Number 1, Fall 2008

Preliminary LPSS event schedule, ALA Midwinter 2009 –

Denver and cyberspace

As LPSS works out how to conduct both virtual and face-to-face meetings, it will be especially important for members to keep track of updates on LPSS-L and the section website.

LPSS Social Event

Eat, drink, and socialize together in Denver. Time/place TBA

General Membership Meeting

Saturday January 24, 4-5:00 pm,
place TBA.

Please join us in Denver or virtually.

All-Committee Meetings

...will be held virtually!

*Note: virtual meetings may meet before
Midwinter.*

Chris Palazzolo is this edition's LPSS member to know. See story, page 3.



(Photo by Bruce Pennek)

Special message from the chair:

Realize virtual meetings at 2009 Midwinter

By Ann Marshall

At one of my first LPSS meetings, members talked about the possibility of holding virtual meetings. At the time, I remember thinking: *Why all this talk about virtual meetings?* Now, five years later, it's clear to me that these discussions were very important. Many of our institutions simply will not or cannot fund our travel to multiple conferences a year – perhaps not even one. Many of us are left to cover our own increasingly prohibitive travel expenses.

For the first time, LPSS will hold virtual committee meetings for ALA Midwinter. This means that, instead of holding an in-person meeting in Denver, our LPSS committee meetings will be held via the use of IM/chat software or a conference call, allowing members to attend the meeting long distance from your office or home. In accordance to ACRL guidelines, these meetings will be synchronous (ie, occur in real time) and will be open meetings, meaning that all members (including you!) can attend without travel or registration costs.

Since this is new to LPSS, I will be very interested in everyone's feedback post facto about what worked and what did not.

In addition to the travel cost savings, virtual committee meetings have the potential to increase participation from our members. I'd like to see us have 100 percent attendance of our appointed committee members at these virtual committee meetings. In addition, for those of you who have not yet joined a committee, our Midwinter meetings will be an excellent opportunity for you to try out a committee.

So please consider joining us. Yes, all of us probably attend more meetings than we'd like, but, for an hour of your time, you can get a sense of what your colleagues around the country are collaboratively working on and you can consider, given your own career goals, what you have to contribute.

We have many exciting things in the works this year – a program on civic engagement at ALA Annual 2009, plans to enhance the content on our website, and the promotion of our newly adopted LPSS Political Science Research Competency Guidelines, just to name a few.

How do you find out more about attending LPSS virtual committee meetings? We will announce the virtual meetings on the LPSS website,

(See **Digital**, page 7)

ISA: AN ALTERNATIVE OPTION TO APSA AND ALA

By Lucy Eleonore Lyons

I always feel as if I am caught by surprise when my library announces that travel requests are due. It seems as though I just made all those arrangements for the last trip, and now I already have to think about the next.

Of course, the easiest thing to do in such circumstances is to simply repeat last year's request and go to the same venue. If, however, you would like a change but do not have time for the research, please continue reading this article. For LPSS members, here is a viable alternative to the conferences of the ALA and even the American Political Science Association.

When the International Studies Association (ISA) was formed in 1959, it was a small group whose goal was to create a global channel of communication between scholars, educators, practitioners, and policy makers. It is now the most widely known association covering the field of international relations, and has thousands of members in over 80 countries from A to Z (well, okay, except O, Q, W, and X).

The annual convention is usually held in North America, but if your travel budget is very nice, there are also affiliated international conferences in, for example, Australia, Brazil, and Slovenia in 2008-2009. The latter conventions are cosponsored events held by the ISA and one of its "Cooperating Organizations."

This past March, over 5,000 individuals, the largest crowd ever, descended on San Francisco to participate in the 49th Annual Convention. The theme this year, "Bridging Multiple Divides," was designed to "enhance dialogue among the many vibrant research communities within international studies." For example, the panel "From Dictatorship to Democracy: The Role of Strategic Nonviolent Movements" brought together the different ontological and epistemological views of both the Peace Studies and the International Security Studies sections.

In total, there were over 800 panels. Though I learned a great deal from the sessions I attended, there seemed to be too many to me — too many choices and too many sessions with too few attendees.

Table I is an analysis of sessions sponsored by each of the 23 sections within the ISA. The data were gathered from the final program. Just as in the example above, some sessions were cosponsored by more than one section. (Hence, the total — 1,077 — is higher than the actual number of panels that took place, but that does not matter for this particular analysis.) The table provides an interesting portrait of which thematic subfields are currently garnering the greatest and least attention within international relations studies.

International Security Studies not only sponsored the greatest number of panels, but sponsored almost twice as many as the section with the second largest number, namely, International Political Economy.

Ironically, and as a comment on our times, sadly, it appears that the study of war, terrorism, insurgency, international crime, small arms, nuclear strategy, militarization, and failed states dominate the study of international relations at the same time that the study of diplomacy is getting the least attention.

If it is possible, it would be fascinating to trace these patterns through the almost 50 years of the existence of the ISA.

ISA section distribution of meeting sessions, 2008		
ISA Section	# of Sessions	% of Total
International Security Studies	166	15.41%
International Political Economy	95	8.82%
Foreign Policy Analysis	86	7.99%
International Organization	74	6.87%
Peace Studies	67	6.22%
International Political Sociology	64	5.94%
Global Development Studies	62	5.76%
Ethnicity, Nationalism, & Migration Studies	55	5.11%
Feminist Theory & Gender Studies	55	5.11%
Human Rights	48	4.46%
Environmental Studies	41	3.81%
Comparative Interdisciplinary Studies	39	3.62%
International Law	35	3.25%
Scientific Study of International Processes	34	3.16%
International Ethics	32	2.97%
International Communication	28	2.60%
Post-Communist States	22	2.04%
Intelligence Studies	15	1.39%
Women's Caucus	14	1.30%
Active Learning in International Affairs	13	1.21%
International Education	13	1.21%
English School	10	0.93%
Diplomatic Studies	9	0.84%

Chris Palazzolo: another LPSS Member to know

By Lee LaFleur

Chris Palazzolo came to the profession of librarianship through his academic interests as a political science PhD student at Emory University, in Atlanta.

As a graduate student, Chris originally joined the library staff at Emory through a graduate fellowship in 2004, and permanently joined the ranks as political science/international documents librarian in 2007 after the completion of his PhD in western European politics.

Among his many duties, he coordinates a large-scale scanning and digitization initiative for the university libraries and was recently appointed as the social sciences team leader, for which he oversees the activities of a group of social sciences librarians under the Libraries new team structure.

In addition to his more traditional work as a librarian, Chris also teaches an undergraduate survey course in western European politics.

Chris says that his work as a librarian has allowed him to marry two of his main interests in literature and teaching, and that his love of political and social sciences research has been a real asset to him in his career.

Chris has been a member of the ACRL Law and Political Science Section since 2004, and has served on the publications committee and the instruction committee (as chair-fall of 2008). He aspires to the seat of vice chair of the section in an upcoming election.

Among the benefits of membership, he says, the opportunity to meet colleagues with similar concerns is one of the highlights. As a new librarian he found it particularly rewarding to network and share approaches to instruction and reference, as it helped to better ground him in the profession. Along with that he also enjoys the opportunity to socialize with like-minded librarians both professionally and personally.

At Emory, much of Chris' work has focused on information literacy instruction. His involvement with LPSS has allowed him to learn more about how other individuals and institutions develop and implement library instruction on their campuses.

In addition to LPSS, Chris has been involved with the ALA Government Documents Roundtable (GODORT) and the American Political Science Association (APSA). Notably, he helped organize and present at the LPSS-

(See **Know**, page 7)

Call for nominations: Marta Lange/CQ Press Award

This \$1,000 cash annual award recognizes an academic or law librarian who, through research, service to the profession, or other creative activity, makes distinguished contributions to bibliography and information service in law or political science. This award honors Marta Lange, 1990-91 Law and Political Science Sections chair, whose exceptional talents as a leader were enhanced by a wonderful collegial spirit. The award is sponsored by CQ Press.

Nominees should have achieved distinction in one or more of the following areas:

- Planning and implementation of a model bibliography/information services program in a law or political science library
- History of contributions to the field through research, publications and other activities displaying active participation in the advancement of law/political science librarianship
- Service to the profession through ACRL or related regional and national organizations
- Promotion or development of an education program for law and political science librarianship that has served as a model for other courses and programs.

Electronic submissions are required. Nominations should include a letter of nomination including the name, address, and phone number of both the nominating party and the nominee as well as a narrative supporting the nomination, and a current vita. Individuals may nominate themselves or others.

Deadline for submissions is Dec. 5, 2008. E-mail the nomination documentation to the award committee chair, Leslie Homzie, Boston College, at <homzie@bc.edu>.

For additional information, contact Homzie at <homzie@bc.edu> or Megan Griffin at (312) 280-2514, <mgriffin@ala.org>.

Proposal: Criteria for evaluating political opinion blogs

By Erik Estep

Blogging is a recent phenomenon; as a part of the Internet revolution it really didn't take on a life of its own until the turn of this century. Since then, blogs have been key ingredients in the rise of some politicians (Howard Dean's candidacy was sparked by the bloggers at Daily Kos) and the downfall of others (Trent Lott had to resign his leadership position in the Senate due in large part to the wide dissemination by liberal bloggers of his comments at Strom Thurmond's 100th birthday party, which seemingly endorsed segregation).

However ubiquitous blogs may be, they have not yet been examined closely by librarians as sources of political information. Political opinion blogs have great potential as historical artifacts. For instance, it would be impossible to get a complete picture of the run up to the Iraq War without reading the prolific "warbloggers."

Even though the Library of Congress is finally starting to catalog blogs, there hasn't been a concerted effort to collect this valuable information.

Perhaps most importantly, there have been no major attempts to assess political blogs either. To fill in this gap, I propose nine evaluation questions:

Who is the author? *This is more complex than at first glance. Some authors like to mask their blogs in a cloak of anonymity. In our own profession, there is The Annoyed Librarian <annoyedlibrarian.blogspot.com>.*

Political Affiliation? *Former affiliation? Political operatives bounce back and forth between work for candidates and the world of journalism. It is important to discern if a writer is still affiliated with a candidate.*

Is the blog hosted by another site? *There are many meta-blog sites like <www.huffingtonpost.com> and*

<www.dailykos.com>. Also, there are prominent bloggers like Andrew Sullivan and Matthew Yglesias who bounce around from online magazine to online magazine. They both are currently hosted by the Atlantic but they were previously with Time and the American Prospect, respectively.

Is the blog archived? *This is an important question. Generally speaking, blogs that have archives tend to be more reliable and it allows the reader to see how the blog evolved. Unfortunately, very few blogs have extensive archives.*

Does it have a blog roll? *Blog rolls are an easy to find out about ideology. Most of the time, blogs link to like-minded blogs. What is the ideology of the blogs listed? See previous question.*

Does the blog link to other blogs? *Again, this is a way to gauge how connected the blog is to the national conversation about politics. What kinds of blogs? This is another way to place the blog ideologically.*

When was it last updated? *Too often blogs become abandoned.*

Are comments allowed? *This is hit or miss. Comments can allow for a race to the lowest common denominator as readers use the medium to insult each other or deposit spam on the page. On other hand, comments can give readers a sense of community and develop a loyal readership.*

Do you have to register with the blog to post comments? *Registration allows for responsibility among posters.*

Does the blog provide any statistics? *Blogs can be measured by the amounts of hits or links. This adds currency to the blog.*

Review: Primary sources through Gale Digital Collections

By Catherine Shreve

The Gale Digital Collections comprise more than two dozen primary-source collections centered on four themes: Making of the Western World, American History and Culture, History and Culture Through Media, and 20th Century Political and Cultural Change. Each theme encompasses a rich selection of primary materials pertaining to politics, law, and society.

While the collections derive almost entirely from British and American archives, there is international coverage throughout. Most notably, the 20th Century Political and Cultural Change collections cover Western Europe and the Middle East, through the lens of the major conflicts of that time.

There is such a wealth of content that each collection could be the subject of its own review. For LPSS members, I will provide very broad content overviews, and then focus on one example, the Declassified Documents Reference System. Gale provides more extensive descriptions at <<http://www.gale.cengage.com/DigitalCollections/overview.htm>>.

Each collection under a theme may be purchased individually, or may be bundled with others from any of the topical groupings to meet your institution's research and pricing requirements.

(See **Gale** page 5)

Gale Digital Collections

(continued from page 4)

The Making of the Western World, a very ambitious theme, gets historians started with Eighteenth Century Collections Online – significant publications from Great Britain and the Americas from that century – and delves into the origins of modern law. The Goldsmiths'-Kress Library of Economic Literature also falls under this theme. From there the coverage crosses the ocean with the next topic area, American History and Culture, including original documents on law, the Revolution, the Civil War, slavery, immigration, and women's suffrage. The Sabin Americana collection supplements this theme with first-person accounts of life and exploration in over 400 years in the Americas.

The perennial problem of indexing for historical newspapers is solved with the History and Culture Through Media collections. With the Gale online interface users can search and retrieve the full text of newspapers dating back to the 17th century in the UK; 19th century US newspapers; *The Economist* archive back to 1843; and *The Times* (London) Digital Archive, 1785-1985.

International relations researchers and modern historians will find abundant background material in the 20th Century Political and Cultural Change collections. Government documents, original accounts, images, maps, books and interpretive essays provide insight into both governance and personal lives during the World Wars and other 20th century conflicts.

There are collections centered on the Middle East (Arab-Israeli relations, Iraq), Northern Ireland, and Occupied Western Europe. Other collections explore the more personal impacts on Holocaust survivors, refugees, and women.

Since Gale uses the same interface for all the collections, I will focus on my favorite, Declassified Documents Reference System (DDRS), to demonstrate usability and scope. DDRS comprises over 600,000 pages of previously secret US government documents.

Gale plans to enlarge the archive in 2009 and add approximately 500,000 pages annually after that. The firm promises also to expand the types of documents covered, to include statistics, international coverage, memoranda and other unpublished documentation of international relations from the Cold War to present. The FBI Files microfilm will be digitized as well.

As of this writing, DDRS draws declassified documents from the past and as they are released from Cabinet meeting minutes, National Security Council policy statements, CIA intelligence studies, presidential conferences, State Department political analyses, and Joint Chiefs of Staff papers. You may limit your search by document type,

source institution, classification level, sanitization and completeness.

Gale is still working on the controlled vocabulary, so it is most effective to use very broad search terms. For example, "Oliver North" AND "contra" yielded one result, while "Oliver North" alone retrieved 32 hits. You may display results by relevancy or by date issued. Once you find documents you want, it is very easy to use them.

Printing works conveniently from the prominent PDF icon, and e-mailed documents come through successfully. The "view text" option is a bonus that allows you to get the transcription of documents that are often lined through, scribbled upon, all caps, or otherwise difficult to skim due to the quality of the originals.

The Gale Digital Collections greatly enhance access to primary sources for researchers in international Relations, law, public policy, political science, and history. As our undergraduates are increasingly asked to base their original thinking on primary documents, it is very helpful to gather in one online space so much material that was previously scattered about the Web or available only in microform. For example, one colleague describes the DDRS as "an essential complement to Foreign Relations of the United States and to the National Security Archive collection."

However, the cost of these collections can be prohibitive even after customer loyalty and bundle discounts. The pricing may give budget managers pause, especially if a library has already purchased some of the original microforms.

Call for proposals for APSA 2009 annual meeting

The Political Science Education section of the American Political Science Association invites proposals for papers, panels, and roundtables on topics related to educating students. It also seeks people willing to serve as chairs and discussants.

The APSA annual meeting will be Sept. 3-6, 2009, in Toronto, ON. Deadline for proposals is Dec. 15, 2008.

This division aims to advance all aspects of political science education. It therefore welcomes a wide range of topics and methodologies. Similarly, the section is committed to including all people interested in the teaching of politics at two- and four-year colleges and universities. It welcomes submissions from faculty, librarians, administrators, and graduate students.

The section is particularly interested in proposals that incorporate the theme of this year's conference, the pursuit of knowledge in a context of change and complexity -- for example, approaches to teaching political change and complexity, or changes in how political subjects are taught, or administrative and curricular complexities that affect students and educators.

Johnny Goldfinger <jgoldfin@iupui.edu>, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, is the program chair, to whom questions may be directed.

APSA's full call is online at <www.apsanet.org/section_222.cfm>.

Editor's note: Reviewer Catherine Shreve, Duke University, was promoted to full librarian rank, with continuing appointment, effective July 1. Shreve is a reference librarian and the librarian for public policy and political science.

Review: *What counts in Canada-US relations*

By Graham R. Walden

(Editor's note: this review was first posted to the section listserv, LPSS-L, on June 20. Many section members have not opted to join our list, so we reprint the review here.)

Canada and the United States: Differences that Count, ed. by David M. Thomas and Barbara Boyle Torrey. Broadview Press. 3rd ed. Broadview Press, 2008. 434 p. index. ISBN 978-1-55111-712-6, pbk \$42.95.

At a time when US presidential candidates are discussing alternative approaches to such issues as health care coverage it is opportune to look at the methods taken by our neighbor to the north. This book is edited by a Canadian (Thomas) and new to this edition by an American (Torrey). They have assembled 20 mostly Canadian authors to write on an array of topics. Thomas is a recently retired vice president of Malaspina University-College in Nanaimo, British Columbia, and Torrey is a visiting scholar at the Population Reference Bureau, and formerly with the US National Academy of Science.

Ninety percent of the Canadian population lives within 160 kilometers of the United States border, and yet as the authors note, the inhabitants of both countries remain something of a mystery to each other. Canadians have a fear of convergence, but it is suggested in this volume that there is actually an increasing divergence rather than a convergence. Canadians views are closer to those held in other Canadian provinces rather than any region of the United States.

This compilation is designed for students, the general public, and scholars and teachers of comparative politics. In-depth analysis of the economic relationship between the countries is left to other sources (some of which are identified in the notes sections associated with each chapter).

Some interesting points highlighted in a general overview include the statistics that Canada takes 23 percent of American exports, and that Canada supplies 17 percent of US imports. To give some sense of the cross-border traffic, on a daily basis some 30,000 trucks and 100,000 cars traverse the border. On a political basis, Canadians have a different take on US presidential politics. In a survey of Canadians, when asked who they would have voted for in the 2004 US election, 70 percent indicated a preference for Kerry versus 15 percent for Bush.

Since the events of 2001 both countries have been preoccupied with security issues, defense costs, and international relations. The approaches taken in each country so far as maintaining statistical data are quite different. In Canada there is a centralized statistical system, by contrast the United States employs a decentralized approach. In the US race relations are important, and the Census Bureau has long retained detailed data related to race. Canada does not collect data on race, but rather on ancestry.

Areas covered in this volume include, but are not limited to the following: treatment of minorities, health care system, public welfare system, taxation, legal system, crime, jury selection and sentencing, judges, election spending, issues related to federalism, relationship with aboriginal peoples, chief executives (prime ministers and presidents), impact of age, education, income, and religion on voting, environmental regulation, and dispute resolution. The contributors perceive the Canada-US relationship as "fundamentally sound," but "sometimes rocky."

The overall aim of the contributors is to provide a comparative overview that avoids "shallow generalizations." Interestingly, while trade between the two countries continues to increase, this has not led to the "integration of values, attitudes, identities or policy preferences." Students and scholars of comparative politics will find much of interest in the 18 chapters presented. These are divided into four parts, and cover the essential issues that separate us, and provide the outlines as to the different ways the two countries seek to resolve the major challenges of existence.

Summary: Highly Recommended. This book is a valuable addition to our understanding of the neighbor with whom we share so much, and yet from whom we are quite different.

Guidelines for contributors

The deadline for the next edition of the *LPSS News*, subject to decisions by ACRL, will be around March 10. Expect to receive that *News* by mail about mid-May. For next fall's edition, figure Sept. 10 and mid-November, respectively.

Email articles, illustrations (*at least 300 dpi resolution, grayscale preferred*), and correspondence to the editor at <bpencek@vt.edu>.

Length: most articles should run fewer than 400 words. (The review on this page runs about 600 words.)

Write in short paragraphs. Use the most direct, energetic style you can muster. Have a point, and don't be reluctant to have a point of view, too. Write as a journalist, not a booster.

Write to be useful to the membership. The format and publication frequency make features the strength of the newsletter, not old news. The LPSS listserv is the best place to post, discover, and comment on breaking events. The website is the natural location of our official reports and meeting minutes. The LPSS wiki will become what you make it.

Digital Midwinter

(continued from page 1)

the LPSS listserv, and on ALA's website: <www.ala.org/ala/meetings/othermeetings.cfm>. Note that the committee meetings may be held **before** the actual ALA Midwinter Conference, in order to avoid scheduling conflicts with those who are traveling to Denver for Midwinter.

If you're thinking of attending a virtual LPSS Midwinter committee meeting, please don't hesitate to contact the relevant committee chair (see LPSS website for more info) or me at <ann.marshall@rochester.edu> and we'll be happy to answer any questions.

Finally, I'm a strong believer that there is no true substitute for face-to-face interaction. So, I hope that we will see you at LPSS event/s **in person** in the upcoming year. We'll have two in person events at ALA Midwinter in Denver – a social event (date/time to be announced on the section listserv) and an in person/virtual General Membership Meeting, tentatively planned for Saturday, Jan. 24, 4-5 pm.

LPSSers cross border for IFLA

By Lynne Rudasill

Several members of the Law and Political Science Section were involved in "Disappearing Disciplinary Borders in the Social Science Library: Global Studies or Sea Change?"

This satellite conference of the International Federation of Library Associations' Social Science Libraries section was held at the University of Toronto's Faculty of Information, Aug. 6-7,

Presentations at the conference explored the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary aspects of the social sciences with a view to the effects of emerging disciplines. Themes included interdisciplinarity, data services in the social sciences, continuing challenges, social networks and interdisciplinary networking, and social science portals.

The full text of papers presented at the conference is available at the IDEALS institutional repository at the University of Illinois <www.ideals.uiuc.edu/handle/2142/8807>.

Plenary speakers included Rea Devakos, T-Space Coordinator, and Laine Ruus, Data Librarian, both from the University of Toronto. The keynote speaker was David Moorman from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Clemencia Montalvo from the Universidad de la Salle in Bogota, Colombia, received the travel award for a librarian from a Latin American library or library school.

LPSS members presenting papers included Lee LaFleur (George Mason University), Jenny Mendelsohn (University of Toronto), and Lisa Norberg (UNC-Chapel Hill).

The conference received financial support by the Center for Global Studies at the University of Illinois, the University of Toronto Faculty of Information, the World Universities Network, the libraries of the Universities of Toronto and Illinois, and CQ Press.

Also, keep your eyes open for an LPSS event at ACRL's National Conference in Seattle this coming March. Come June, ALA Annual in Chicago will be a very important face-to-face event for us this year, where, in addition to the 2009 program, a LPSS discussion session, and the Marta Lange/CQ Press Award ceremony, all of our committees will hold in-person meetings.

Know Palazzolo

(Continued from page 3)

GODORT pilot preconference for the 2007 APSA annual meetings and was a presenter at the "Got Elections?" preconference for this year's ALA annual.

Among his professional development activities, he recently presented a paper on the process of strategic planning at the Association of Research Libraries Assessment Conference in Seattle, Washington.

Chris says that one of his goals as a librarian and a political scientist is to educate faculty and students better about the "vast arsenal" of research resources they have at their disposal.

When asked to name one of his favorite "tools" in that arsenal, he selected the *National Journal* website. Among its many attributes, he lauded its well-integrated content with a focus on campaigns and politics, as well as supplementary resources like "Poll Track" and *the Almanac of American Politics*.

Another of Chris' goals is to encourage faculty and students to take advantage of the libraries' human resources, namely, librarians and staff, in order to maximize their research potential. In his comments, he expressed the vision that librarians and teaching faculty are on the same team, and ultimately share the same goal -- the promotion and support of quality research.

Is there an LPSS member whom you'd like to know better through a profile in the LPSSNews?

Is there a member you could profile in 5-600 words who would interest the rest of the section?

Email your suggestions to the editor at <bpencek@vt.edu>.

LPSS News
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